

THE COUNTY RECORD

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THE MORAL DANGERS OF CITIES.

GILDED VICE.

Be of Good Courage, and Let us Play the Man for Our People and for the Cities of Our God, 2 Sam. 10: 12.

The phenomenal fact of our modern world is the marvellous growth of cities. Whither in one of his poems pictures the smoke curling over the cabin of the pioneer and likens the movement of immigration to the incoming tide—"the first low wash where soon will roll a human sea." Well many now living have seen the tide come in. There are squares in most of our great cities which were once the playground and even happy hunting grounds of a man still living. Some look upon this fact, the growth of great cities, as alarming. Thomas Jefferson always feared the effect of large cities on a democratic form of government. He called them the "plague spots" of civilization. A book ran through this country like red fire not long since sounding the old note of alarm—the danger and menace of cities. I can not regard such fear as a sound and wholesome view of the matter. The growth of cities is in reality a step of progress in the evolution of human society. True enough it indicates a significant change in the mode of human life and action, but the outcome will be better human conditions. The fall of the Roman Empire seemed like the end of the world; and it was in a sense an end of one world, but the beginning of a new world. The Crusade was a world movement that failed of its immediate quest but fulfilled a larger purpose. So it will be with the movement toward cities. Science has made cities places of safety, of comfort and of power. In many respects life at its highest and best is to be found there. All feel its attraction.

All changes, however, bring new and subtle forms of temptation. Every great change in circumstance brings new tests to character, just as every new chemical substance added to a mixture effects in some form the character of the whole. In this fact we find the pathetic interest that centers in Hovenden's great picture breaking home ties. What will be the effect of this new life on the soul of the boy? The setting of the text is one of trial. The words of David. He looked upon life not as a losing struggle but as an opportunity to win great victories. So Christians in every generation are to look upon the world as something to be subdued and subordinated to the will and glory of God. As a preparation for victory a recognition of dangers will be helpful.

One subtle form of temptation which assails character in cities and from which rural life is comparatively free is the secrecy possible there.

There is no solitude, not even that of the desert or the wilderness, like that of a great city. While surrounded by vast multitudes that flow by one like a great ocean current, one seems detached and strangely alone. Life is reduced to a time table. We touch for the most part in a business way and that means that human interest is for the most part eliminated. Of course we gain in time freedom and independence. But the danger is that a certain sense of responsibility may pass away with the change. The very moment one allows the sense of personal responsibility to weaken within him, that moment he begins to morally deteriorate. Certain old castles used to have dark secret passages, where deeds of violence and shame could be carried on out of sight and public knowledge. Well, a city is full of just such hidden, underground ways, where an evil life may be hidden for a time from view. A certain degree of public knowledge and sentiment is wholesome and bracing to every one. It is a sort of outside conscience. When that is for the most part removed one is thrown altogether on the conscience within for his moral power and fiber. Many a temptation finds its last and successful answer in the whisper "What is the difference? Who will know anything about it?" When one yields to the delusion that wrong can be successfully concealed or its consequences of shame and pain avoided, it is but a short step to the deed itself. "That way" was aimed at the "moral quality of action and of life is the one thing that can not be concealed. The night shineth as the day to him with whom we have to do."

There is a moral danger in the very presence of a multitude. That old prohibition "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" was aimed at the weak point in our human nature. It is so easy to go with the multitude, to keep step and march under flaring banners. "What everybody says must be true." Is that the abiding test of truth to you? "When at Rome do as Romans do," so runs the maxim. The world will love its own—those who are obedient and conform. Society certainly has a domain of authority over the individual. Certain laws, regulations and customs are not only wholesome, but even necessary if we are to live together harmoniously and helpfully, but there is a limit to its dominion. The highest life must be self-determined. Some questions must not be put to a popular vote. A true and noble selfhood must be maintained at any cost.

There is danger also in the splendid materialism of the city. One is apt to be dazzled by the magnificence of all that he sees about him. A voice seems to say these things are real and abiding. They are the only prizes of life. And so the glorious realities of mind and spirit fade out of mind and heart. Before one is aware of it he is following in the mad rush for mere earthly good, drawn into the whirl of the present world as Lot was drawn into Sodom. The hills where Abraham pitched his tent seemed high and cold and bare, but Sodom was full of life, activity and interest. The world has its use, its activities of trade, its discipline of achievement, its power, its splendor, but it also has its abuse, it may overwhelm the soul with its semblance and But the most subtle danger of all is in the form of gilded sins.

One does not admire a caterpillar as he does a butterfly, but the difference is not great. The butterfly has wings bright and beautiful. The repulsive-ness of the worm is forgotten under the flashing lights of the brilliant and many colored wings. It is so with sin. In cities its repulsiveness is lost in gilded forms. Many forms and glaring instances of evil doing are excused, passed over, tolerated, because of the position, wealth or power of the offender. Gilding covers a multitude of sins, and obscures everlasting distinctions.

Yet, what, in cities the subtlest trace of heroic living and of saintly conquest are to be found. The imperative need of our time, the distinct Christian duty of this generation is for the redemption of cities.

NAPHTALI LUCCOCK.

AMERICAN PEARLS FOUND IN PLENTY.

The pearl boom is the latest successor of Klondike and its attendant excitements. For several weeks the people of Arkansas have been worked up over the discovery of pearls in some of the lakes and rivers of that State, and in some places half the population have been industriously digging mussels in the hope of sudden wealth, while the rest of the country has been agitating itself on the subject of dollar wheat. A New York di-

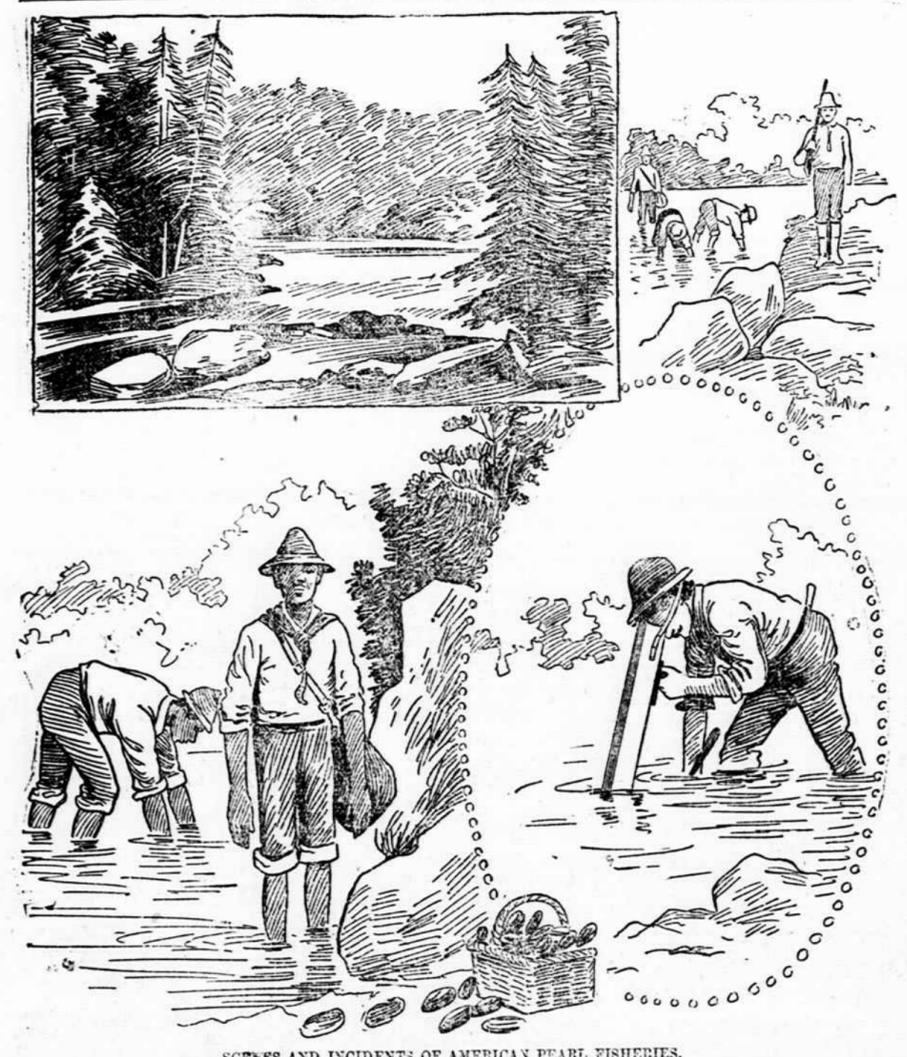
Several Memphis citizens have invested money in leases in White County, and the concern already referred to will make an organized effort to develop the industry in the lakes and ponds which it controls. This company has already taken out several hundred dollars' worth of pearls, but so far the work has all been done by colored diggers and divers, who are paid \$2 per day for their services. On account of the color of the water they

has received an offer of \$100. He found them all in the course of a week. Many of the natives in White County have in their possession pearls of more or less value taken from the ponds before the excitement set in. Many of them decline to say anything about their finds, as they don't wish to encourage a rush to the spot.

WORLD'S LARGEST OXEN.

Wegh 7300 Pounds—Yokes Seven Feet Long—Have Hauled 11,061 Pounds.

The greatest yoke of cattle ever seen in this country is owned by J. D. Avery, of Buckland, Mass. They are named Joo and Jerry. Their age is eight years and they measure ten feet in girth. They stand seventeen hands high, and their measurement from tip to tip is fifteen feet eleven inches. There is not a difference of ten pounds in weight between them,



SCENES AND INCIDENTS OF AMERICAN PEARL FISHERIES.

among broker recently exhibited a very large pearl which had been sent to him from the Arkansas field, just what part of it he refused to say. The stone is one of the finest specimens of the "sweetwater" variety ever seen in New York. It is perfectly formed, slightly oval in shape, of a pure white, and weighs thirty-five grains. It is valued at \$800. Another broker recently received a consignment of Arkansas pearls, which included a pink pearl, weighing twenty-six grains. It is worth not more than \$100, however, on account of a slight blemish on one side. Many smaller pearls have come from this same region during the past week, and there is talk of a New York company to work some of the Arkansas pearl lakes. It is possible, however, that they will be late in the field, as a Memphis company has already leased one of the most promising lakes for a term of five years for \$4500, and individual speculators have obtained control of several others.

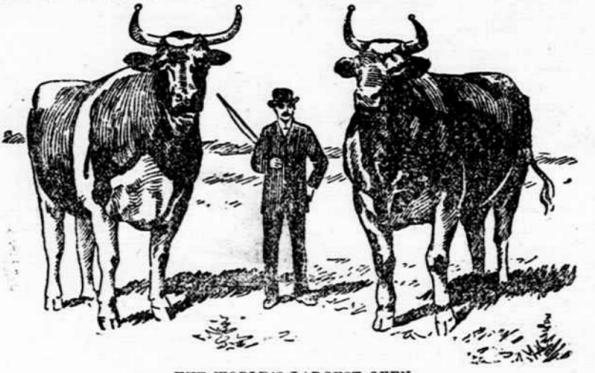
The Klondike excitement is not to be compared with the enthusiasm in Northern Arkansas over the recent finds of pearls. At Helena and Little Rock family parties are going out to camp along the river and hunt for pearls. Most of these parties have found only small stones, but one woman picked up a pink pearl worth \$50, and two small boys who were looking for clams and not for pearls found two stones which they sold for \$25 apiece. Most of the valuable finds, however, have been made in the lakes and ponds, which are controlled by private individuals or by companies. In some places the owners have had to stand guard with shotguns to keep off the enthusiastic pearl seekers, who have been accustomed to hunt clams wherever they wished, and who think that the mere fact that the shells may contain gems worth \$100 or so ought not to make any difference in their right.

The Arkansas pearl fisheries are recommended as a good substitute for Alaska for those who are in search of hardship and adventure. There is not so much frost and snow, but there is plenty of malaria, which is apt to carry off the unacclimated visitor, and the swamps and forests which one has to traverse in order to reach the lakes where the treasures lie will supply the adventurer with as many unpleasant experiences as Chilcot Pass. Besides the malaria that hangs round the lakes and swamps, they contain sulphur and iron, which give the water a decidedly unpleasant yellowish tinge. The places in which pearls have thus far been discovered are Murphy and Walker Lakes, Cross Lake, Sulphur and Four-Mile Ponds, and the creeks flowing into them. These are all in the Bald Knob country southwest of Memphis.

have to feel for the clams, which are buried in the mud, with their hands or bare feet, and so can work effectively only in shallow places. As soon as machinery can be put in, however, the bottom of the lakes, including the deeper parts, will be thoroughly dredged, and it is expected that more satisfactory results will be obtained. It is the theory of the Memphis men who are backing the enterprise that mussels occasionally shed their pearls, and that others that have died still contain the gems, and will be found buried deep down in the mud at the bottom of the lakes.

It is possible, too, that the manufacture of mother of pearl will be started to utilize the shells, as is done in Lower California, from whence most of the pearl used for buttons for our waist-coats and dresses now come from. Mother of pearl, it may be explained, is simply the smooth inside lining of the shell, which is cut out and used for buttons and ornaments.

Instances of rich finds are reported every few days from Bald Knob or the adjoining country. A few days ago a colored man, who gave his name as Harris, walked into a Memphis jewelry store and exhibited a small bag of pearls. Most of the stones were small and worth not more than \$4 or \$5 each, but there were a few of larger size, including one or two pink pearls of very good quality. An offer of \$100 was made for the lot. The colored man held out for more, and finally accepted \$150. He said that he had worked for a month and had opened thousands of shells to get the stones. He ac-



THE WORLD'S LARGEST OXEN.

knowledge that he was from "down White County way," but refused to tell where he had found the gems, as he said that there were more in the same place, and he was going back after them. A man named Deale, in Bald Knob, sent a dozen pearls to New York, and

combined their equal does not exist in the world. It may be of interest to know that their food consists of eight to twelve quarts of corn and oats ground together, two quarts of flax meal, and from six to eight quarts of bran each day, with an occasional change to suit their appetites."

BARON NORDENSKIÖLD.

Career of the Great Explorer—One of Sweden's Most Widely Known Men.

Baron Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld is the most widely known of Sweden's great men. Although distinguished for his family and high social stand-



BARON NORDENSKIÖLD.

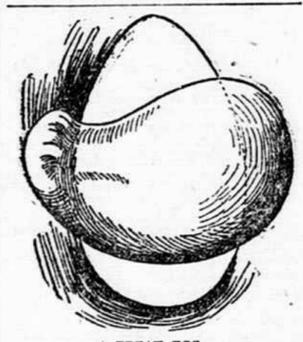
ing, the baron has won for himself a great name in science. His family had long been eminent in scientific pursuits, and he began his studies with his father, Nils Gustaf, who was the chief of the Finland mining department. He entered the University of Helsingfors in 1849, and spent his vacation in the study of mineralogy. Of that science he soon became an eminent expositor. He was forced from his native country of Finland by the Russian Government, and chose Sweden to live in. He traveled to Spitzbergen, and on his return to Stockholm was appointed director of the mineralogical department. In 1868 he made his first great polar voyage and attained a latitude of eighty-one degrees and forty-two minutes. In 1872 he decided to make another trip to northward, and it was on this voyage that he made the first attempt to penetrate the inland ice in the interior. His researches on this voyage were of vast importance to science. Nordenskiöld now turned his attention to Siberian exploration and accomplished much in that direction. Backed by the Swedish King, the doctor made an effort for the discovery of the northeast passage in 1878. His vessel the Vega, and she reached Japan one year after sailing. On his return he was made a baron and appointed a commander of the Order of the North Star. Baron Nordenskiöld has written voluminously on scientific subjects.

Production of Peanut Oil.

The production of peanut oil in this country has hitherto been carried on in a desultory way, and it has not been much known as a commercial article. However, as the chemical composition of the peanut has become better known, attention has been called to the food value of the peanut meal and the peanut grits. It has been found that they are richer in nitrogenous principles than any of the vegetable seed cakes, and a demand has sprung up for them. So the expression of the oil has now been undertaken on a larger scale and with more suitably designed presses. The cold-pressed oil is of a pale yellow color, and of pleasant flavor and odor. A very slight refining produces a very agreeable table oil for salads and general culinary purposes. When once freed from the free acid found in the raw state, it does not tend to become rancid as readily as olive oil.

Queerest of All Eggs.

In an attempt to eclipse the efforts of others of her kind an Okawville (Ill.) hen has produced an egg which



A FREAK EGG.

for peculiarity of shape and color is not equalled in the annals of the barnyard. Grocer Charles F. Meyersick, of St. Louis, owns this remarkable egg, and if it were a nugget from the Klondike he could not value the strange freak more than he does. In appearance the egg looks like a mock orange or a gourd. It weighs about half a pound.

Cheap Living.

Paraguay, in South America, is a cheap place to live in. A house servant there costs only \$2.45 a month; and ordinary ones not so well trained only \$1.64 a month. A cook can be hired for about \$1 a week for a good one, though a fair one can be hired for \$3.20 a month.

Water That Petrifies.

Extraordinary qualities are possessed by the River Tinto, in Spain. It hardens and petrifies the sand of its bed, and if a stone falls in the stream and alights upon another, in a few months they unite and become one stone. Fish cannot live in its waters.

A Minnesota farmer has raised enough corn on ten acres to heat his house and feed two horses and a cow through the winter.

GOOD ROADS NOTES.

Thinks the South Ahead.

"In the matter of building good roads," says the Helena (Montana) Independent, "it is said that the South is now ahead of the North, and that North Carolina leads the South. Under the law of that State, petty misdemeanants are employed at making public roads, and convicts are employed in the same way. Under the operation of this law the State roads are being changed from mud to macadam. Tramps are included as misdemeanants, and, when caught, they are set to work on the roads.

Pennsylvania's Road Law.

The Hamilton Road law, which will not become operative until a future legislature shall appropriate one million dollars for the purpose, provides that every township shall elect three supervisors, who shall levy a road tax of not more than ten mills on the dollar, unless an increase shall be ordered by the court, not to exceed ten mills more. In addition to the mileage tax, the supervisors shall assess one dollar upon every taxable resident, of which not less than one-fourth nor more than one-half shall be exacted in money, as the remainder may be paid in work. An abatement of five per cent. will be made on all taxes paid before June 1.

The township shall be divided into districts with not less than five miles of road in each, under a roadmaster, who shall work thereon or hire laborers, he an they getting wages per hour, fixed by the supervisors, but the work may be given out under contract. Supervisors may join with like officials of one or more other townships or borough authorities in the same county for purchasing implements and machines. The Treasurer of the Board of Supervisors is to receive such compensation as the members may allow, not exceeding five per cent. of all money received and distributed by him. All the Boards shall make reports annually to the Secretary of Agriculture.

Provision is made, through viewings, for the laying out of private roads, under or over the surface, or partly over and partly under the surface of intervening land or lands, to reach bituminous coal, iron ore or fire clay underlying adjacent land.—L. A. W. Bulletin.

In the Interest of Good Roads.

The farmer should be particularly interested in having good roads, first, because he is usually taxed heavily to maintain them—as real estate cannot escape taxation—and secondly, for the reason that he has occasion to use them to a greater or less extent in the prosecution of his business. And the last may often outweigh the first in dollars and cents, when it is taken into consideration the moving of heavy loads for a considerable distance over poor roads.

Here is a view of the case that should not be lost sight of. It is not those alone who drive for pleasure or business over our highways that should ask for or demand their improved condition. This is for their interest and convenience, it is true, and rightly, too, but the farmer who has to move his produce to market or place of shipment, or in the daily prosecution of his work needs to use the road, gains or loses in this direction in accordance with their good or bad condition.

Good roads in such cases mean the saving of time, the greater durability of vehicles and the wear of teams. Good drainage for roads should be sought for, as this is of the first importance. The ditches should be placed well back from the roadbed, so as to prevent undermining or gully-ing.

Hills should be carefully looked after and the grade made as easy as possible. The surface of the road should be somewhat rounded, so that the water may readily pass off at the sides, rather than run along on the wheel tracks, washing away the dirt and forming holes and gullies. The surface should also be kept clear of small stones that are always so troublesome. Passing over the roads once a month for this purpose should be more generally practiced.

Small repairs should always be attended to in season, as in this way large expense can often be saved.

It will pay to go two miles, if it can not be obtained nearer, to get gravel with which to fill bad places in roads.

In parts of the country where stone is scarce and gravel can be had, good roads can be made by using this material plentifully on the surface. Of course this means that the road-bed is first put in good condition for the gravel. This method is used to some extent at the West, and even here in the East where stone abounds, gravel, where it can be conveniently obtained, is much prized.

It is possible that in the future portable stone-crushing machines will be largely used in road making in the country, by means of which this plentiful material can be put to some useful purposes.

Above all things, it should be the purpose to get the best men possible for the work of road supervision, and having obtained them keep them until others equally good or better can be found to take their places.

In this way, going slowly it may be but surely forward in the right direction, the time will not be far distant when a great improvement in our highways will be apparent all over our land.—E. R. Towle, in Farm, Field and Fireside.

Published After Fifty Years.

Christina Rossetti left the MSS. of a story for girls, which is shortly to be published under the title of "Maud." The story was written nearly fifty years ago, and its history is given in preface by W. M. Rossetti.